

**COLORADO RIVER RECOVERY PROGRAM  
FY-1999 ANNUAL PROJECT REPORT**

**Project No.: PIP-4**

- I. Project Title: Capital Improvement Projects in the Grand Junction, Colorado area
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III. Project summary:

The mainstem Colorado River from Rifle, Colorado to Lake Powell, Utah supports populations of Colorado pikeminnow, humpback chub, razorback sucker, and bonytail. One focal point of recovery efforts of these endangered fish is the 15-Mile Reach of the Colorado River immediately upstream of the confluence with the Gunnison River, near Grand Junction, Colorado. Capital improvement projects concerning this 15-Mile Reach include:

**(1) Grand Valley Water Management**--A proposal to develop and evaluate a water supply alternative for the 15-Mile Reach of the Colorado River. Included in this project is making efficiency improvements to the Government Highline Canal (part of Reclamation's Grand Valley Project) and delivering surplus water from Green Mountain Reservoir to the Grand Valley Power Plant near Palisade, Colorado.

Progress

The agreement for surplus water delivery from Green Mountain Reservoir's historic user's pool to the Grand Valley Power Plant has been executed and is now in effect. The agreement was reached in March 1999 after negotiations between the Orchard Mesa Irrigation District, Grand Valley Water Users Association, Public Service Company of Colorado, and Reclamation. A draft of another agreement to provide surplus water for the 15-Mile Reach is being developed.

The efficiency improvements have been delayed until the 15-Mile Reach programmatic biological opinion is released. A contract (with Reclamation, Colorado Water Conservation Board, and the Grand Valley Water Users Association) to reimburse the Grand Valley Water Users Association for the increased operation and maintenance of the water conservation improvements is being finalized. Work continues on a contract with the Colorado Division of Wildlife, Division of Parks, Reclamation and the Grand Valley Water Users Association to use Highline Reservoir for temporary storage.

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Completion date

The Grand Valley Water Management project is scheduled for completion in 2002.

**(2) Price-Stubb Dam**--Provide fish passage on the Colorado River upstream of the 15-Mile Reach.

Progress

In April 1999, Reclamation released the draft environmental assessment (EA) to more than 100 individuals, organizations and agencies for review. Also in April, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission issued a draft EA on an amendment to license a non-Federal hydroelectric power plant which would require use of the Price-Stubb Dam. If FERC approves the amendment, Reclamation would construct a fish ladder in cooperation with the licensee. As a result, Reclamation is waiting for FERC's decision on the hydropower project before resuming planning for fish passage at the diversion dam.

Completion date

Completion date for fish passage at the Price-Stubb Dam is 2001.

**(3) Grand Valley Project Diversion Dam**--Provide fish passage on the Colorado River upstream of the 15-Mile Reach.

Progress

A request for issues/concerns regarding the fish passage was sent out via a newsletter to more than 100 in October 1999.

Completion date

Completion date for fish passage at the Grand Valley Project Diversion Dam is 2001.

IV. Schedule:

**Grand Valley Water Management**

Initial year: FY93

Final year: FY02

**Price-Stubb Diversion Dam Passage (Abandoned)**

Initial year: FY98

Final year: FY01

**Grand Valley Project Diversion Dam Passage**

Initial year: FY98

Final year: FY01

V. Relationship to RIPRAP:

COLORADO RIVER ACTION PLAN: MAINSTEM ACTIVITIES

I.A.3.c.(3)(f) Grand Valley Water Management Project

II.B.2. Restore fish passage at the abandoned Price-Stubb Diversion Dam

II.B.3. Restore fish passage at Government Highline (Roller Dam) Note: This is also called the Grand Valley Project Diversion Dam

## GENERAL RECOVERY PROGRAM SUPPORT ACTION PLAN

VI.C. Plan and implement information and education and public involvement activities for all significant Recovery Program actions.

### VI. Accomplishment of FY 99 tasks and deliverables:

#### Grand Valley Water Management

Task: To gain water user cooperation and construction of the improvements so late summer flows will be enhanced.

Task: Develop public awareness and support and/or informed consent for this water conservation project.

- \*\* Held one-on-one meetings with water users -- **FY99**
- \*\* Held one-on-one meetings with potentially affected interests -- **FY99**
- \*\* Participated in the 15-Mile Reach Strategy Workgroup and Biological Opinion discussions -- **ongoing**
- \*\* The Environmental Assessment Summary and Finding of No Significant Impact for the Grand Valley Water Management plan was distributed to 78 interested individuals, organizations, and agencies--**10/5/98**
- \*\* The Grand Valley Water Management Final Environmental Assessment was released and distributed to more than 60 interested individuals, organizations, and agencies--**10/30/98**
- \*\* News release announcing availability of the Grand Valley Water Management plan was released--**11/98**
- \*\* News article in Fruita Times "Bureau of Reclamation assessment available"--**11/98**
- \*\* News article in The Daily Sentinel "Highline canal upgrades due"--**11/98**
- \*\* News article in The Daily Sentinel "Diversion may leave farms dry"--**2/99**
- \*\* Classified ad in The Daily Sentinel "Colorado Water Diversion. Help. We need support to help obtain legal counsel to fight for our water rights" **2/99**
- \*\* News article in Glenwood Post "Ruedi to increase river flow --**5/99**
- \*\* News article in The Daily Sentinel "Spring storms will allow officials to flood river to aid fish survival"--**5/99**
- \*\* The Daily Sentinel Editorial "Fishing for a flood" -- **5/99**
- \*\* News article in The Daily Sentinel "Colorado River flows boosted to help endangered fish habitat"--**6/99**
- \*\* News article in The Daily Sentinel "Ladders can help endangered fish"--**7/99**

**Findings and shortcomings:** We need to do a better job of explaining the complex problem of water rights, reduced spills, percent of spills of overall flows. Historically, administrative water has been spilled in 6 washes along the Government Highline Canal. Some spilled water is subsequently diverted from the washes, usually for irrigation purposes. Those who rely on getting their irrigation water from waste ditches are upset that, with water management, their water supply from waste ditches would be reduced.

#### Price-Stubbs Diversion Dam Passage (Abandoned)

**Task:** To develop public awareness, and support, to the extent possible for fish passage at the abandoned Price-Stubb Diversion Dam.

- \*\* News release soliciting public input for fish passage at Price-Stubb–**12/98**
- \*\* Letter to Editor in Palisade Tribune soliciting comments on fish passage–**12/98**
- \*\* News article in Citizen Telegram “Bureau of Reclamation requests input for fish passage study at Abandoned Dam”–**12/98**
- \*\* News article in The Daily Sentinel “Build a ladder or remove a dam to save the fish”–**1/99**
- \*\* Letter to Editor in The Daily Sentinel “Removal of Price-Stubb dam would aid river boating”–**1/99**
- \*\* Interviews were conducted with the radio and tv reporters on Recovery Program activities and the Price-Stubb Diversion Dam fish passage–**ongoing**
- \*\* News article in The Daily Sentinel “Study evaluates diversion dam’s density”–**2/99**
- \*\* News article in The Daily Sentinel “Ute Water says customers depend on dam”–**3/99**
- \*\* Letter to the Editor in The Daily Sentinel “Water can be protected with removal of old dam”–**3/99**
- \*\* News article in Denver Post–“Dam demolition hits stumbling blocks”–**3/99**
- \*\* Held one-on-one meetings or group meetings with water users and interested public–**ongoing**
- \*\* Draft Environmental Assessment was sent to more than 100 interested individuals, organizations, and agencies for public comment–**4/99**
- \*\* Draft EA posted on Reclamation’s web site–**4/99**
- \*\* Developed E-Mail address to receive public comments–**4/99**
- \*\* News release announcing availability of draft EA–**4/99**
- \*\* News article in The Daily Sentinel “Ladders can help endangered fish” –**7/99**
- \*\* News release announcing “Plans to Remove Price-Stubb Diversion Dam on Hold”– **10/99**

**Findings and shortcomings:** (1) the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, recreation, Ute Water Conservancy District, and the endangered fish issues are more complicated than we anticipated. (2) The public does not understand the fish needs. (3) The head of the Colorado Department of Natural Resources has announced publically that there are plenty of endangered fish in Colorado.

### **Grand Valley Project Diversion Dam Passage**

- \*\* News article in The Daily Sentinel “Ladders can help endangered species”–**7/99**
- \*\* Newsletter was prepared and distributed to more than 100 individuals, organizations and agencies updating them on what was happening with all the Colorado River fish passages and requesting their input regarding ideas and concerns with the Grand Valley Project Diversion Dam fish passage–**10/99**
- \*\* News release announcing “Fish Ladder Proposed at Grand Valley Project Diversion Dam”–**10/99**

**Findings and shortcomings:** It’s too soon to tell. This information will be included in the FY 2000 report.

## **VII. Recommendations:**

Grand Valley Water Management– None

Price-Stubb Diversion– None

**Grand Valley Project Diversion Dam**– Passage will be discussed in reference to the Grand Valley Irrigation Company Passage. The EA will “tier” off the GVIC passage to avoid duplication of information.

VIII. Project status:

**\*\* Grand Valley Water Management**--Construction of canal improvements is delayed, but will be an on-going and on-track activity in FY00+.

**\*\* The Price-Stubb Dam**–passage is delayed and should be kept on public involvement until successful completion of the fish passage.

**\*\* Grand Valley Project Diversion Dam** -- A request for ideas or concerns about the Grand Valley Project fish passage went out October 99. The draft EA should be released for public review in February 2000.

IX. FY 99 public involvement budget (Recovery Program funds only):

A. Funds provided:	\$30,000
B. Funds expended:	<u>\$30,000</u>
C. Difference:	\$ 0

Percent of the FY 99 work completed, and projected costs to complete: 100%

Recovery Program funds spent for publication charges: \$300.00

X. Signed: Jone Wright                      12/6/99